NATION

No trains, job hunters attack Bihar rail station

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BUSINESS

FPIs withdraw Rs 62,800 cr in 14 days

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Brazil rallies for 1-1 draw against Morocco

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

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Don't deploy Indians in war zones: Govt to firms

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

The Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) has advised maritime recruitment and placement agencies to restrict deployment of Indian seafarers to conflict areas until further orders, days after three Indian seafarers onboard MT Settebello were killed after the US military strike on the commercial vessel off the Oman coast. DG Shipping in a circular said masters of vessels operating in or transiting through the Gulf region, including the Strait of Hormuz and adjoining waters, are advised to maintain heightened security awareness, closely monitor navigational warnings received and advisories issued from Security agencies, and implement all applicable ship security measures and Company Security Procedures. —*PTI*

Not discontinuing Gruha Lakshmi: Shivakumar

BENGALURU, 14 JUNE

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Sunday categorically denied discontinuing Gruha Lakshmi and Gruha Jyoti guarantee schemes of the Congress government and appealed to the public not to pay heed to rumours being spread by the opposition. In a statement, he said, "Gruha Lakshmi and Gruha Jyoti are the pride of the Congress government. They will not be stopped under any circumstances. The public should not listen to the false news being spread by Opposition parties in this regard."—*PTI*

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Don't blow Iran deal: Don warns Israel

A small motorboat passes anchored vessels in the Strait of Hormuz off Bandar Abbas, Iran —*PTI*

Iran yet to confirm if peace deal will be signed

WASHINGTON, 14 JUNE

US President Donald Trump on Sunday attempted to play down Israel's strikes on Lebanon ahead of the expected electronic signing of a peace deal with Iran.

Israel launched massive airstrikes on Lebanon's capital Beirut, which Iran has repeatedly warned is a red line. At least three people were killed in Beirut's suburbs, Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported.

WEST ASIA WAR DAY-107

"Don't blow it," Trump posted on his Truth Social, urging Iran, Hezbollah and Israel to refrain from attacks. "This morning's attack should not have happened".

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the strikes were in response to Hezbollah attacks on the north of the country. However, Trump also appeared to scold Israel, saying that the attacks they were responding to by bombing Beirut "were small" and that no one was injured.

Trump had previously suggested that a deal to end the war could be signed in Europe on Sunday, but hasn't provided further details on where things stand since. Pakistan, which has been mediating between the US and Iran, also appeared to confirm this. However, Iran has not confirmed that the deal would be signed on Sunday, although Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said that a deal has "never been closer".

It is unclear what the peace deal contains, but Iran has repeatedly stressed that it wants a ceasefire on all fronts, "including Lebanon and Gaza".

Iran's semi-official Mehr and Fars News Agencies reported that the deal includes an immediate reopening of the crucial Strait of Hormuz to all commercial vessels, while the US agrees not to impose any new sanctions on Iran until a final deal is reached.

Trump earlier said that the Strait would immediately open when the deal was signed. Additionally, the US and the United Nations would agree to remove all sanctions in an agreed upon timetable, including oil sanctions.

The US may also release $25 billion of Iran's frozen assets. In exchange, Iran will agree to neither produce nor acquire a nuclear weapon, something that has been at the forefront of the war. There is also likely to be a 60-day negotiating window for further talks. —*Agencies*

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Sailor from Tamil Nadu dies in ship off Oman coast

The body of an Indian sailor who died aboard a vessel docked at Oman's Duqm Port has remained on the ship for days without proper refrigeration, prompting urgent appeals from seafarers' and intervention by the Indian Embassy.The deceased 35-year-old Nishanth Uirthanathan from Tamil Nadu was a second officer on MT Celestial. The Indian Embassy in Muscat said he died due to medical complications. The Forward Seamen's Union of India said Uirthanathan fell ill on 11 June and alleged that medical evacuation was delayed due to war . It claimed his body was being preserved with cold water bottles in the absence of proper refrigeration, calling the situation "horrifying" and a health risk.MT Celestial had earlier been stopped by US Marines in May on suspicion of violating the American blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, but was released after a search.

>>>*More on Page 3*

Indian vessel sinks off Oman, all 11 rescued

An Indian-flagged merchant vessel sank off the coast of Oman on Sunday after suffering a mechanical failure, with all 11 Indian crew members rescued in a multi-agency operation involving Omani authorities, the US Navy and a nearby commercial ship.

The mechanised sailing vessel Virat 1 ran into trouble around 80 nautical miles east of Ras Al Hadd after its engine failed. As the vessel began taking on water and sinking, the US Navy alerted shore authorities and launched an emergency response.

A US Navy P-8 maritime patrol aircraft was deployed to the area, dropping a life raft near the vessel and monitoring the evacuation. Assistance was also provided by MV Jabal Ali 9, a St Kitts and Nevis-flagged merchant ship operating nearby.

The incident comes amid heightened tensions in the Gulf region. Last week, three vessels with Indian crew members came under US attack off the Oman coast, with one strike killing three Indian seafarers. —*Salar News*

CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke with actor Prakash Raj and activist Sonam Wangchuck at the Freedom Park in Bengaluru —*SALAR*

CJP braves rains to protest in B'luru

BENGALURU, 14 JUNE

Braving torrential rain, hundreds of youths under the banner of the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) staged a protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Sunday against alleged irregularities in the NEET examination, demanding the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

The protest, organised under the banner of the 'Justice' campaign, saw demonstrators raise slogans against the BJP-led Centre and seek accountability over the alleged paper leak. Organisers said similar agitations had been held in New Delhi and Hyderabad, and the campaign would continue across the country.

Actor Prakash Raj and activist Sonam Wangchuk joined the demonstration and extended support to the protesters.

Addressing the gathering, Wangchuk said India faced not just a "fiscal deficit anymore, but a trust deficit". He accused the government of undermining democracy, saying, "Please declare that India is no longer a democracy. It has become a totalitarian country."

Responding to slogans demanding that he become the education minister, Wangchuk said the minister "should be like him, not him", adding that he was present only to support the fight against what he called a "rotten" education system.

Prakash Raj questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence over repeated examination controversies. "Our Prime Minister is the most educated. Then why are you silent, educated Prime Minister?" he asked.

Raj also praised Wangchuk, saying, "I wish Sonam Wangchuk was our Education Minister."

The protesters demanded safeguards to prevent future irregularities and remained at the venue despite intermittent rain. Earlier in the day, CJP staged a similar protest in Hyderabad. —*Salar News with Agencies*

Hundreds of protesters braved the rain, raised slogans against the Centre and demanded accountability over NEET paper leak —*MOHAMMED ASAD*

India innovating for world, not just itself: Modi

NICE, 14 JUNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said India had evolved from being a consumer of global solutions to becoming a major contributor, as he outlined New Delhi's vision for human-centric innovation and technology.

Speaking at the inauguration of the 'Bharat Innovates' in Nice alongside French President Emmanuel Macron, Modi said innovation and inclusion were complementary and that the true value of innovation lay in its impact on people's lives.

"Until a decade ago, the world viewed India as a nation that adopted technology. Today, India is emerging as a technology provider," he said, adding that India's innovations benefited a vast segment of humanity. Modi said the world was looking for technologies that were reliable, inclusive and geared towards the global good, stressing that India's priority was "technology for humanity" and human-centric innovation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron visit an exhibition during the 'Bharat Innovates' in Nice, France —*PTI*

Highlighting reforms in sectors such as high technology, nuclear energy, defence and innovation, he said the momentum of change would continue and the number of Indian startups would multiply manifold.

Calling the current decade one of both disruption and development, Modi said conflicts and climate change had created unprecedented challenges, but technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, biotechnology, space technology and advanced materials would shape humanity's future.

"Bharat Innovates is an invitation to the world to co-create the next chapter of global innovation with India," he said. Macron described India as a "country of innovation", praised the Make in India initiative and said there was scope to expand bilateral cooperation, including in civil nuclear energy and Small Modular Reactors. —*PTI*

>>>*More on Page 3*

US-based Christian missionary org booked under UAPA in B'luru

BENGALURU, 14 JUNE

A case has been registered against a US-based organisation and six others after the ED lodged a complaint alleging illegal utilisation of foreign funds through a network of foreign debit cards in Left Wing Extremism (LWE)-affected areas.

Based on a complaint filed by ED Assistant Director Sunil Kumar Sinhmar, Kothanur Police registered a case on 11 June under the BNS and UAPA.

The FIR names Jonathan S Rajan, Micah Mark, Ajit Verghese Mathai, Varghese Chacko, Bablu Kurmi, Supreme Joy, and the US-based The Timothy Initiative and others as accused.

The ED alleged that searches conducted on 18 and 19 April as per the II Act and FEMA revealed that the accused, in association with TTI, used foreign debit cards issued by a US bank to utilise foreign funds across India.

The ED said alleged that approximately Rs 92.55 crore (USD 99,95,240) was utilised illegally from November 2025 to April 2026 violating FEMA and FCRA.

One Micah Mark was detained at the Bengaluru airport on 18 April and was found with 24 foreign debit cards.

Around 1,000 such cards had been distributed across India, many carrying the common name 'Santosh Kumar' with regional identifiers like "NE-1", "NE-2" and "Southern Region-1".

The ED said that cash withdrawals were detected in the LWE-affected regions of Chhattisgarh. Approximately Rs 6.34 crore was withdrawn in Dhamtari and Bastar over the last few years. —*PTI*

Rebel TMC MPs merges with Nationalist Citizens Party

NEW DELHI, 15 JUNE

The rebellion in the Trinamool Congress reached a new high on Sunday as dissident MPs announced their merger with the Nationalist Citizens Party (NCP) and met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla seeking a separate seating arrangement in the House.

Rebel MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar said two-thirds of the TMC's Lok Sabha members had submitted a letter to the Speaker seeking recognition as a separate group.

Senior TMC leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay confirmed that the dissident camp had merged with the NCP, describing it as a regional party. The Nationalist Citizens Party is a registered but unrecognised political party based in Tripura.

LS Speaker Om Birla receives a letter from TMC MPs including Sudip Bandyopadhyay, Satabdi Roy, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Mala Roy and others for separate seating arrangement in New Delhi —*PTI*

Asked about the rival claim of the Mamata Banerjee-led faction, Bandyopadhyay said the courts would decide who constituted the "real TMC". He added that the rebels would stake claim to the party's 'two flowers' election symbol. The Mamata camp simultaneously moved to counter the rebellion. TMC MPs Kirti Azad and Sagarika Ghose met Birla and handed over a letter from Abhishek Banerjee. —*PTI*

>>>*More on Page 3*

GLITCHES & SCREEN LIMITS

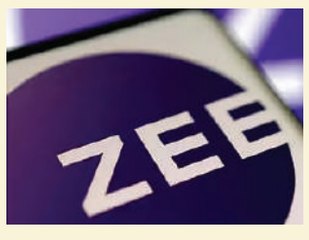
Fans fume at Zee's FIFA coverage

MUMBAI, 14 JUNE

Indian football fans took to social media to express outrage over Zee Entertainment abruptly changing the terms for its broadcast of the FIFA World Cup 2026, as well as for the poor streaming quality on its Zee5 app.

Zee Entertainment bought the India broadcast rights for the FIFA World Cup 2026, with the tournament's matches being available live on the newly launched Unite8 Sports TV channels and on the Zee5 app.

Viewers in India were disappointed with the streaming quality for the opening Mexico versus South Africa match that aired on Thursday night. Many said it was inadequate, and that they could not access an option to view the match in 4K resolution. Some fans were also disappointed that they could not watch the highlights of the match without paying.



- Viewers were disappointed with the streaming quality for the opening Mexico versus South Africa match.

The complaints first began after fans noticed, just hours before the tournament began, that the Zee5 platform had suddenly changed its tournament-specific subscription plan of Rs 799 for three months, to accommodate only one device instead of three. Subscribers called the change 'misleading' and 'unfair', with some even terming it 'robbery,' 'scam' or 'fraud.' The change was reversed in a few hours, reportedly due to the backlash. The company later announced, however, that the number of devices on the three-month plan will be reduced again to one, from the initial three, for those who subscribed to the application after 10pm on Thursday. —*Salar News*

R'than ACB arrests B'luru cops over Rs 40,000 bribe

JAIPUR, 14 JUNE

The Rajasthan Anti-Corruption Bureau has arrested a woman sub-inspector and two head constables from Bengaluru Police for accepting a Rs 40,000 bribe in Jaipur. The accused Sub-Inspector Anitha K and Head Constables Ullvappa Tegur and Yateesh were posted at HAL Police Station. They allegedly demanded the money to dilute a dowry harassment case involving the complainant and his family. An operation was carried out at Hotel Gangaur, where Head Constable Ullvappa Tegur was caught accepting the bribe. The other two officers were subsequently arrested. —*PTI*

Not stopping Gruha guarantees, says CM

Shivakumar's resubmission of application order sparks fear over landmark schemes

BENGALURU, 14 JUNE

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Sunday ruled out discontinuing Congress government's Gruha Lakshmi and Gruha Jyothi guarantee schemes, saying beneficiaries would only have to resubmit applications to weed out fake and ineligible recipients.

"Gruha Lakshmi and Gruha Jyothi are the pride of the Congress government," Shivakumar said, urging people not to believe rumours spread by Opposition parties.

The clarification came a day after he announced fresh applications for both schemes following the detection of irregularities.

According to him, Rs 100 crore under the Gruha Lakshmi scheme had been transferred to deceased beneficiaries, while some applicants had furnished incorrect phone numbers and other details.

He said the government wanted to verify beneficiaries' names, addresses and bank accounts to ensure the benefits reached genuine recipients.

Shivakumar also said authorities wanted to know whether funds were being transferred to banks outside Karnataka or diverted for loan repayments or ponzi schemes.

Under Gruha Jyothi, which provides up to 200 units of free electricity, the government found cases where as many as five electricity meters were registered under a single name. Officials also suspect some consumers are availing of the free power scheme for commercial establishments. Gruha Lakshmi provides Rs 2,000 a month to women heads of families.

Women had lined up in ques at a bank to apply for the Gruha Lakshmi scheme, which provides Rs 2,000 to women heads of houses —*PTI*

> **Gruha Lakshmi and Gruha Jyothi are the pride of the Congress government**
>
> -DK Shivakumar, Chief Minister

CM ASSURES TO EXPEDITE BAIRAKUPPE PROJECT

Shivakumar has assured that steps would be taken to expedite the long-pending Bairakuppe bridge project linking Kerala and Karnataka, Keralam PWD Minister PK Basheer said on Sunday.

Shivakumar told Basheer that the proposal would soon be placed before the Karnataka Cabinet.

The bridge across the Kabani river will connect Perikkalloor in Kerala's Wayanad district with Bairakuppe in Karnataka's Kodagu district.

The project, first proposed 1994 ago, is expected to improve connectivity and provide easier access to hospitals, educational institutions and airports in northern Keralam." —*PTI*

Rajya Sabha MP elect from Karnataka and AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan meets Chief Minister DK Shivakumar with his wife Tasbia Mansoor Khan and sons on Saturday evening —*SALAR*

BYV asks RaGa to stop Bidadi township

BENGALURU/ MANDYA, 14 JUNE

State BJP President BY Vijayendra wrote a letter to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, urging him to intervene and "instruct Chief Minister (DK Shivakumar) to abandon the forced land acquisition process" of farmlands for the Greater Bengaluru Integrated Township (GBIT) project in Bidadi.

The township, set to span a whopping 7,481 acres between Bidadi and Harohalli in Bengaluru South district, aims to create India's "first AI-powered integrated township". An estimated cost of Rs 18,000 crore has been earmarked for this project. Earlier this week, the government issued a notification for the acquisition of 499 acres across three villages in Ramanagara and Harohalli taluks, after which farmers announced that they would hold protests on 22 June.

"You (Rahul) raise slogans and hold yatras all over the country in the name of saving farmers' land and protecting the country from corporate grabbers," Vijayendra stated in his letter on Sunday. "But in Karnataka, where the Congress government is in power, your Chief Minister is ignoring the interests of the country's farmers."

The Shikaripura MLA called the project a "government land grab", noting that residents of over 25 villages have been protesting for over 470 days against the project and that over 3,500 small and marginal farmers had submitted objections to the acquisition process.

The Greater Bengaluru Integrated Township (GBIT) aims to develop India's 'first AI-powered integrated township' on 7,481 acres between Bidadi and Harohalli —*x*

> **Shivakumar is a real-estate baron. How did ancestral property of just three acres become assets worth Rs 1,400 crore? He should tell the people how such wealth can be accumulated and how one can become rich so quickly. It will be very useful for the people.. The Congress government itself has set out to loot people's land. The CM has directly joined hands with real-estate mafia bosses to run this business**
>
> -HD Kumaraswamy, Union Minister

Vijayendra alleged that the project was being taken up to reduce traffic congestion and crowding in Bengaluru, but asked why fertile farm land needed to be acquired.

"This land is not a wasteland," he wrote. "It is a fertile land that produces milk, vegetables and fruits for Bengaluru city every day, and is a major crop producing land for coconut, areca nut and banana."

He added that thousands of rural women depend on it and asked, "how is it justified to destroy the ecosystem of the nearby 1,000-acre historic Bairamangala Lake and build a concrete jungle called 'Work-Live-Play'?"

1 LAKH TREES TO BE CUT: JD(S)

JD(S) leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy announced that his party was organising a protest spanning 26 villages against the project on 21 June. He too wrote to Rahul and alleged that the Congress had bypassed the Right to Fair Compensation in Land Acquisition, and Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013, that was enacted by the UPA government.

In the letter, he stated that at least 10 lakh (1 million) trees would be axed in order to build the township. Additionally, he claimed that 50 per cent of the farmers in the affected depend on horticulture and silk rearing, asking how they would survive if there was no agricultural land there.

His father and former chief minister HD Kumaraswamy separately addressed a press in Mandya and alleged that government was seeking a loan of Rs 12,000 crore from HUDCO to acquire land, and that compensation to farmers who had already agreed to part with their land was not yet paid. He alleged a collusion between government and private interests – a jab at Shivakumar. —*Salar News*

Two more detained in ex-soldier's murder case

BELAGAVI, 14 JUNE

The investigation into the murder of former soldier Sandeep Manjari, allegedly linked to a Rs 2 crore insurance claim, has widened with police detaining two more persons for allegedly attempting to destroy crucial evidence.

Sandeep's wife Suma Manjari and her alleged lover Pundalik Dombar were earlier arrested in connection with the case, which is being investigated by Yamakanmardi Police.

Police suspect that key evidence may have been concealed or tampered with during the probe. One of the newly detained persons is reportedly attached to the City Police Commissioner's Office, while the other is associated with a forensic laboratory.

Meanwhile, Dombar released a selfie video on social media claiming he developed a relationship with Suma while working in Sandeep's tea business. He alleged that Suma regularly gave her husband sleeping pills and alcohol and that she had asked him to bring pesticide from their farm after Sandeep was hospitalised following an accident. Dombar claimed Sandeep died the next day. Police have not verified the allegations and said investigations are continuing. —*Salar News*

Sikkim woman killed by boyfriend in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, 14 JUNE

A 22-year-old woman from Sikkim was allegedly murdered by her boyfriend, who slit her throat with a kitchen knife following an argument at their rented accommodation in City's Doddakanahalli on Sunday, police said.

The incident was reported within the limits of Bellandur police station and the man was arrested. The deceased Ati Hangma Subba, 22, was a native of Sikkim who was working as a receptionist at a salon here .

The accused, identified as Purba Lepcha, a native of Darjeeling, was employed as a waiter at a hotel, police said. According to police, the couple had moved to Bengaluru about a month ago. They were living together in Doddakanahalli.

Preliminary investigation indicated that an argument broke out between the two on Thursday morning after the accused allegedly suspected the woman of being involved with another friend.

During the altercation, Lepcha allegedly attacked Subba with a kitchen knife and slit her throat, resulting in her death, police said. —*PTI*

FM refutes K'taka's claims of unfair tax devolution

BENGALURU, 14 JUNE

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday dismissed the Karnataka government's assertion that the Centre was not providing the State its due share of funds.

"Tax devolution to Karnataka between 2014 and 2026 amounted to about Rs 4 lakh crore—five times more than the Rs 82,000 crore received in the comparable pre-2014 period," Sitharaman, who is a Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka, said during the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Samavesha in the City, celebrating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 12 years in office.

She added that grants-in-aid to Karnataka between 2014 and 2026 stood at about Rs 2.71 lakh crore and that the State had also received more than Rs 18,000 crore under the Centre's 50-year interest-free loan scheme.

Later, at a rally in Devanahalli, she said that the Finance Commission decides the tax devolution for five years.

Rejecting the argument that states should receive back all the taxes they contribute, she said, "If Bengaluru, Karnataka contribute and (say) I need to get all the money back, the principle doesn't work like that." —*PTI*

> **If your budget has such resources to give, state it in the budget, discuss in the Assembly, and please give. But don't give if you don't have the money and then blame the Centre saying, the Centre is not giving me money**
>
> -Nirmala Sitaraman, Union Finance Minister

Tibetan govt-in-exile meet DKS, convey Dalai Lama wishes

Chief Representative of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), Jigmey Tsultrim met DK Shivakumar at the latter's residence on Sunday and presented letters from the Dalai Lama and Sikyong Penpa Tsering conveying their congratulations and best wishes to the new Chief Minister, according to a statement. -*ANI*

POSING AS TRAFFIC CHALLAN

Cyber fraudsters steal ₹2.44 lakh by sending APK file on WhatsApp

BELAGAVI, 14 JUNE

Unidentified cyber fraud scammers hacked a man's mobile phone and siphoned off Rs 2.44 lakh from his bank account after sending him an APK file on WhatsApp under the pretext of checking a traffic challan.

The victim, identified as Gajanan Umarani, a resident of Borgaon village in Raibag taluk of Belagavi district, lost Rs 2,44,791 in the fraud.

According to the complaint, Umarani received a WhatsApp message claiming to be related to an RTO challan. The message urged him to verify details of a traffic violation and included an APK file. Believing it to be a genuine communication from the transport authorities, he downloaded and installed the file on his mobile phone.

Soon after the application was installed, cyber criminals gained unauthorised access to his device. They exploited banking information and one-time passwords (OTPs) stored or received on the phone and transferred Rs 2,44,791 from his bank account to unknown bank accounts within a short span of time.

Umarani realised he had fallen victim to cyber fraud only after receiving alerts about multiple unauthorised transactions on his mobile phone.

He subsequently lodged a complaint with the District Cyber Crime Police Station, which has initiated an investigation into the incident.

Authorities have warned citizens to verify the authenticity of any communication purportedly sent by government agencies before taking any action. — *Salar News*

The victim received a WhatsApp message claiming to be related to an RTO challan. He downloaded the file, only to be scammed —*AI*

What is an APK file?

An Android Package Kit or APK is the standard file format used by the Android operating system to launch and run software on Android phones. APK files from unknown sources may install and run malicious software that can steal vital personal data and execute unauthorised actions, which is why police have urged citizens not to download APK files received through messaging platforms from unknown sources.

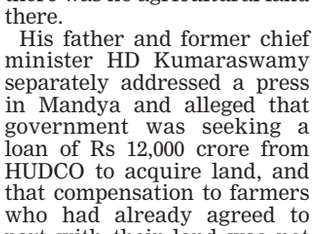
Innovation and entrepreneurship drive Viksit Bharat: Jitendra

BENGALURU, 14 JUNE

Union Minister for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh emphasised that innovation, entrepreneurship, and scientific research will be vital in driving India's economic growth and realising the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. Speaking at the Research, Industry, Start-up and Entrepreneurship (RISE) Conclave, Singh said India was experiencing a transformational shift towards self-reliance under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

Singh highlighted that this citizen-centric movement aims to empower India on both national and global levels through science, technology, and innovation. Singh inaugurated a start-up exhibition showcasing over 100 start-ups across aerospace, food technology, data science, and AI. He outlined achievements including the indigenously designed HANSA-3 trainer aircraft and a 19-seater Light Transport Aircraft.

Singh also discussed the development of High Altitude UAVs and emphasised AI's transformative role. Singh stressed that India's food processing industry, valued at USD 530 billion, could become one of the world's largest by 2030. The two-day event saw participation from over 800 delegates, with numerous MoUs signed to promote joint research and innovation. — *PTI*



Chamarajanagar man trashed for defaming Ambedkar portrait

MYSURU, 13 JUNE

Tension prevailed in Masanapura village of Yelandur taluk in Chamarajanagar district on Sunday after a 25-year-old youth was arrested on charges of defacing a portrait of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Chandru, a local resident, was allegedly caught smearing dung on the portrait. He was tied to an electric pole and thrashed by villagers, before being handed over to the police. A team of police led by Additional Superintendent of Police Shashidhar, Yelandur rushed to the village to bring the situation under control. A case has been registered

Locals demanded strict action to prevent such an incidents from happening again as police presence has been increased. — *Salar News*

—ANI

Probing Ram Temple seers regretful: Akhilesh

LUCKNOW, 14 JUNE

Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav expressed regret that officials are investigating the alleged misappropriation of Ram Temple's donations, and described it as a misfortune. The Yogi Adityanath government has formed an SIT to probe irregularities in the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust. Yadav criticised the move, stating, "It is unfortunate that officials will investigate people associated with our religion and temple... What could be a greater misfortune for Sanatan Dharma?" He called for transparency, suggesting, "If something has happened with the offerings made to Lord Ram, then switch off the cameras and discuss it among yourselves." The trust's general secretary, Champat Rai, said ongoing audits have found no evidence of any wrongdoing, while opposition figures called for transparency. —*PTI*

UDF's free bus scheme for women starts today

T'PURAM, 14 JUNE

Kerala launched 'Priyadarshini', a free travel scheme for women and transgender persons, starting 15 June. The initiative, part of the Congress-led government's five 'Indira Guarantees', covers all ordinary KSRTC buses statewide, with no registration required. Passengers will obtain a zero-value 'Priyadarshini' ticket via ETM, which will record journeys digitally for transparency. Chief Minister V D Satheesan will inaugurate the scheme at Thampanoor bus terminal, travelling on a KSRTC bus with women participants. The government will fund the Rs 60 crore monthly cost, with future expansion planned. Transport Minister CP John said the scheme will support women's employment and mobility, while opposition CPI(M) MLAs will boycott the event, criticising the limited scope of the scheme. —*PTI*

2 suspended for power outage at Vaishnaw's presser

JAIPUR, 14 JUNE

Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Prasaran Nigam Ltd has suspended an assistant engineer and an electrician following an inquiry into the power outage that disrupted Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw's press conference on 11 June. The incident, caused by tripping at the Heerapura sub-station, led to Vaishnaw addressing reporters in darkness for about ten minutes. Energy Minister Hiralal Nagar appointed a three-member committee, which found lapses in handling power infrastructure, leading to the suspensions of Vipin Verma and Babu Singh, with immediate effect. A charge-sheet has also been issued to superintending engineer RP Gupta, seeking his explanation, officials said. —*PTI*

Demolition drive near PM's home removes 3 slums

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

A demolition drive was conducted Sunday in slum clusters near the Race Course in Lutyens' Delhi following a Delhi High Court order. The court directed authorities to clear three slum areas—Bhai Ram camp, DID camp, and Masjid Camp—while ensuring residents' rehabilitation. Land belongs to the Land and Development Office, and the drive involved security measures. Residents have been allocated residences in Narela, with concerns over shifting being addressed. The drive aims to free land for security and defence infrastructure, with authorities deploying police and paramilitary forces to maintain law and order, officials said. —*PTI*

22 TMC rebel MPs to meet Birla today

Didi removes Saayoni, Mala from key positions; Abhishek writes to Lok Sabha Speaker

KOLKATA, 14 JUNE

The crisis in the Trinamool Congress deepened on Sunday as rebel MPs claimed their strength in the Lok Sabha had risen to 22 and prepared to seek recognition as a separate parliamentary bloc from Speaker Om Birla.

Earlier in the day, rebel MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar said two more MPs were set to join the dissident camp. "Twenty-two MPs are with us. The Speaker has given us time. We will meet him on Monday and seek recognition as a separate bloc," she said before leaving for New Delhi.

The rebels later met Union Minister Bhupender Yadav at his residence in Delhi to finalise their strategy ahead of the meeting with Birla. Senior TMC MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay, considered one of Mamata Banerjee's closest aides, also threw his weight behind the dissidents after meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Yadav.

TMC MP Arup Chakraborty, MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay —*PTI*

Bandyopadhyay said he had decided to remain with the rebels after appeals from MPs and MLAs who wanted the party to continue under Mamata Banerjee's guidance. However, he said he was yet to sign the letter to the Speaker and would do so only in the presence of West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari.

The dissidents have claimed they represent the "real TMC" and have already written to Birla seeking recognition. A document carrying the signatures of 19 MPs surfaced on Friday, while separate signatures of Rachana Banerjee and Saayoni Ghosh also appeared on the communication.

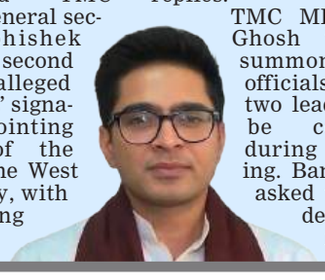
Saayoni, however, refused to speak to reporters on arriving in Delhi, saying she would answer only to the people of her constituency. Her position became more uncertain after Mamata Banerjee removed her as president of the Trinamool Youth Congress, barely a week after reappointing her to the post as part of a major organisational overhaul. Youth leader Arnab Banerjee was named as her replacement.

The Mamata Banerjee camp has strongly opposed the rebels' move. TMC parliamentary party leader Abhishek Banerjee wrote to Birla urging him not to recognise any separate faction and to treat the All India Trinamool Congress as a single political party represented only through its authorised leader and whip.

Abhishek argued that the anti-defection law does not permit recognition of a separate group unless the original political party merges with another party and at least two-thirds of legislators support the move. He warned that the TMC reserved the right to initiate proceedings under the Tenth Schedule. The party also removed Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Mala Roy and Sudip Bandyopadhyay from key organisational posts. —PTI

CID unhappy with Abhishek's replies, summons him again

The CID on Sunday questioned TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee for a second time in the alleged forgery of MLAs' signatures for appointing the Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, with officials saying they were dissatisfied with his earlier replies.



TMC MLA Kunal Ghosh was also summoned, and officials said the two leaders could be confronted during questioning. Banerjee was asked to explain details of the meeting where the resolution was signed and provide specific documents.

The case relates to signatures backing Sovandeb Chattopadhyay's candidature. Discrepancies allegedly found in documents submitted by TMC MLAs led to an FIR and a police CID probe. Several legislators have already been questioned. —*PTI*

WB liquor retailers allege Rs 300 cr scam by TMC govt

Retail liquor traders in West Bengal have alleged that around Rs 300 crore was collected from them as unauthorised transportation and handling charges between 2022 and 2025, and sought an Excise Department probe.

The Society for the Welfare of West Bengal Foreign Liquor Licensees said the distributor-depot system introduced in 2021 requires distributors to deliver liquor to retailers at their own expense. However,

retailers were allegedly charged Rs 10-13 per beer case and similar fees for foreign and country liquor supplies, often without receipts.

The traders' association alleged politically connected individuals benefited from the collections and urged the government to ensure transparency and uniform implementation of the policy. —*PTI*

Amid 'Operation Tiger' buzz, Uddhav meets with 9 LS MPs

MUMBAI, 14 JUNE

Shiv Sena (UBT) party chief Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday met the faction's Lok Sabha MPs. All nine attended.

The development came amid speculation that some MPs might defect to Eknath Shinde's faction under 'Operation Tiger'.

The meeting at Thackeray's Bandra East residence, Matoshree, was attended in person by MPs Anil Desai, Arvind Sawant and Sanjay Patil (all from Mumbai), and Nashik MP Rajabhau Waje. Omprakash Raje Nimbalkar (Dharashiv), Bhausaheb Wakchaure (Shirdi), Nagesh Bapurao Patil Ashtikar (Hingoli) and Sanjay Deshmukh (Yavatmal-Washim) joined virtually, while Parbhani MP Sanjay Jadhav spoke to Thackeray by

phone.

Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut said MLA Aaditya Thackeray was also present and that "All MPs are firmly standing united and are loyally behind the Shiv Sena (UBT). Now, at least, we hope the rumour mill will stop!" he said.

The MP said Thackeray asked the lawmakers to keep an eye on the disbursal of farm loan waiver money announced by the Maharashtra admin. —*PTI*

STILL SHORT IN LS

NDA inches towards two-thirds majority in RS amid TMC revolt

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

Rebellion within the Trinamool Congress (TMC) could strengthen the NDA's position in Parliament as it seeks a special majority to push through key constitutional amendments.

The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, failed to pass in the Lok Sabha. While it was said intended to operationalize the 33 per cent women's quota in legislatures, the amendment also sought to radically expand the Lok Sabha size to 850 seats via delimitation.

To pass the Bill under Article 368, the NDA requires 362 votes in the Lok Sabha and 163 in the Rajya Sabha if all seats are filled.

The NDA currently has 292 MPs in the Lok Sabha and 137 in the Rajya Sabha. In the Upper House, it is expected to

improve its tally from 148 to 151 by winning independent seats in Jharkhand and Mizoram. With three TMC MPs resigning, the alliance is likely to secure all three West Bengal seats in bypolls, taking its strength to 154 -- nine short of the two-thirds mark.

Sources said more TMC MPs may resign, potentially helping the NDA reach 163. However, its tally could dip in November when 10 Uttar Pradesh MPs retire and the Samajwadi Party is expected to gain seats.

In the LS, around 20 rebel TMC MPs may form a separate group and support the NDA, taking its tally to 312. Even then, the alliance would remain about 50 votes short and depend on regional parties to pass constitutional amendments. The rebel MPs are expected to meet Speaker Om Birla on Monday. —*PTI*

Actor Gautami quits AIADMK

CHENNAI, 14 JUNE

Actor Gautami Tadimalla, who was serving as deputy propaganda secretary of AIADMK, on Sunday announced her resignation from the party citing the current political situation.

In her letter to the AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami, she said "considering the current political situation, I am resigning from the post of AIADMK propaganda deputy secretary with a heavy heart so that I could do social service."

Gautami was a long-time member of the BJP for more than two decades before joining AIADMK. She quit BJP in October 2023, citing lack of support from party leadership.

She joined the AIADMK in February 2024 in the presence of Palaniswami and was later appointed as the party's deputy propaganda secretary in October 2024.

OF AIADMK'S 47 SEATS, 31 ARE PMK'S ALMS: SHANMUGAM

In a scathing attack on AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami, senior party leader CV Shanmugam on Sunday claimed that the party's survival in its strongholds was entirely dependent on its allies, terming the seats won there as "alms given by the PMK."

Launching an open rebellion against Palaniswami, he alleged that the leadership has plunged the party into an "autocratic slide" driven by personal egos, family influence, and financial interests. — PTI

OBEDIENT SERVANT: RAHUL SLAMS PM AS US KILLS INDIANS IN HORMUZ

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the US response to the deaths of three Indian sailors in American attacks off the Oman coast, alleging that the Prime Minister behaved like an "obedient servant" and failed to defend the nation's honour.

His remarks came a day after the US said it had conveyed to India that violations of its blockade in the Strait of Hormuz and the illicit transport of Iranian oil would not be tolerated.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio conveyed the message to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, who had spoken to him to lodge a strong protest over the deaths.

In a post on X, Rahul Gandhi said there was "neither regret nor apology" from the US despite the deaths of Indian

sailors. Quoting the American warning to comply with United States military's orders, he said a sovereign nation would never tolerate such language.

"A compromised PM? Silent. He listens like an obedient servant and complies with the orders," Rahul Gandhi said, adding that a leader beholden to foreign powers would not defend the country's honour.

In a separate post, Gandhi also urged the government to bring home the body of an Indian sailor who died due to medical complications aboard a vessel docked at Duqm Port in Oman. —*PTI*

Macron talks shared AI goals at 'Bharat Innovates' in France

NICE, 14 JUNE

Addressing the Bharat Innovates Launch 2026 in France, French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday said India is a nation of innovation and that both countries have a true partnership in critical sectors like AI and climate change.

"We respect the Make-in-India initiative. France has been part of it in diverse sectors," he said. "There is scope to expand cooperation in civil nuclear energy sector, including in Small Modular Reactors," Macron said.

Macron highlighted the India-France partnership in AI, stressing the need for ethical, responsible and open models. He noted that this shared vision has guided bilateral engagement on AI governance, pointing to the co-chaired AI Summit in anu-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with French President Emmanuel Macron during a visit to Villa Kerylos in France —*PTI*

ary 2020 and the New Delhi Summit 2026. He added that the two countries would continue their cooperation ahead of the next summit in 2027. Warning against efforts to monopolise advanced AI, Macron said India and France support multilingual, cooperative AI and open models for the greater good, rather than restricting access and collaboration.

Modi is currently in France, where he is scheduled to hold talks with Macron and attend the G-7 Summit. He landed in Nice on Saturday, kickstarting a tour which also includes a two-day visit to Slovakia.

Bharat Innovates 2026 is a initiative by the Indian government designed to accelerate the country's deep-tech startups and R&D ventures on a global stage. —*Agencies*

SUSPECT'S HOME RAZED

U'khand BJP man killed over water feud

DEHRADUN, 14 JUNE

A dispute over irrigation water turned deadly in Uttarakhand's Bairagiwala village, where a 44-year-old BJP functionary was allegedly beaten to death and three of his family members critically injured, police said on Sunday.

Vinod was killed on Saturday after an altercation with a neighbour, Imtiaz, over watering an adjacent field. Police said a group of more than 40 people armed with lathis, wooden planks, hammers and shovels later stormed his house and attacked the family. Vinod died on the spot after being struck on the head with a hammer.

Authorities demolished the allegedly illegal residence of one of the suspects named Aman Ali. (inset) The murdered Vinod —*SCREENGRAB*

His brothers Ashok and Rajesh, and sister-in-law Sushma sustained serious injuries and were admitted to hospital.

The police registered a case against 12 named accused and 30-35 unidentified persons on charges including murder and rioting. The FIR names Razzak, Imtiaz, Aman, Yunus, Shahbaz, Sharafat Ali, Masoom, Adil, Shamoon, Salman, Javed and Intezar.

The killing triggered unrest in the village. Hindu groups blocked roads and the victim's family initially refused to allow his body to be taken away until strict action was promised. Right-wing groups allegedly pelted the accused's houses with stones, vandalised property and set one house ablaze.

Authorities later demolished the allegedly illegal residence of one accused, Aman Ali, amid chants of "Jai Shri Ram". Heavy police deployment, including the Provincial Armed Constabulary, remained in place on Sunday. —*PTI*

Keralam CM, Oppn leader criticise VCs over RSS event

T'PURAM, 14 JUNE

Kerala Chief Minister VD Satheesan criticised the participation of three Vice Chancellors at a function addressed by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat as part of the organisation's centenary celebrations and demanded an apology from them. In a Facebook post, the CM said the participation of the VCs was unbecoming of their office and inconsistent with Keralam's educational traditions.

Vice Chancellors of Kerala, MG and Malayalam Uni versities attended the RSS centenary celebrations held in Thiruvananthapuram on Saturday.

Satheesan said Kerala society held the VC's office in high esteem and alleged that their participation in a programme of an RSS leader who propagated "extreme communal views" had diminished the dignity of the post. He demanded that the three VCs who attended the RSS programme apologise to the people of Kerala.

Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition Pinarayi Vijayan also expressed concern over the VCs' participation in the RSS event and alleged that it reflected attempts to expand the Sangh's influence in the higher education sector. — *PTI*

—PTI

M'rashtra road deaths up, safety body fails to meet

MUMBAI, 14 JUNE

Maharashtra has not convened its statutory State Road Safety Council meeting in over three years, despite reporting over one lakh accidents and more than 50,000 deaths since then, officials said. The last meeting, chaired by the transport minister, was on 4 April 2023, with no subsequent meetings, although rules mandate biannual reviews. Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik assured it would be convened in the first week of July. The Council, established under Central Motor Vehicles Rules, is responsible for reviewing accident trends, and monitoring safety measures. Data shows Maharashtra recorded 1,17,070 accidents in 2023, with 50,488 fatalities. The state ranks third in road fatalities, with over 35,000 accidents. *—PTI*

Iron frame on rail track halts train near Lucknow

LUCKNOW, 14 JUNE

A train accident was narrowly avoided after an iron frame was allegedly placed on the railway track near Dilkusha in Lucknow's Cantonment area, officials reported. The incident occurred around 2 pm on Friday, when train number 13006 Punjab Mail was passing the section. The loco pilot spotted the heavy iron door frame on the track and applied emergency brakes, striking the object but causing no major damage. Railway and RPF personnel removed the object and seized it for investigation. A case has been registered under relevant Railway Act sections, and police are examining CCTV footage. Preliminary investigations indicate miscreants or drug addicts may be responsible, but Intelligence agencies have also been alerted. *—PTI*

8 die in Ch'garh, toxic liquor suspected

BALODABAZAR, 14 JUNE

Police are investigating after eight men died over four months in Chhattisgarh's Balodabazar district, with villagers suspecting toxic liquor. The victims died between February and May in Kharve village. One victim's body was exhumed for forensic exam. Villagers and relatives filed a complaint, raising suspicion about a shopkeeper who may have supplied harmful substances. The last victim, Mehetaru Sahu, died on 14 May, and his body was exhumed for tests. The police said forensic reports will determine the cause of death, and no evidence has been found against the shopkeeper yet. *—PTI*

—INSTAGRAM

Haryana makes 'Bharat Bhagya Vidhata' tax free

CHANDIGARH, 14 JUNE

Haryana has declared the film 'Bharat Bhagya Vidhata,' starring Kangana Ranaut, tax-free. Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini announced this after attending a special screening. The film, set during the 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attacks, portrays how hospital staff and security personnel displayed courage amidst chaos. Saini praised the film, calling it a powerful narrative of duty and humanity, adding, "Society often celebrates heroes, but the true heroes those who serve without recognition." He highlighted the role of doctors, nurses, police and social workers, stating they are the first to act. *—PTI*

No trains, job hunters attack Bihar rail station

Candidates lathi-charged, Railways says trains adequate

PATNA, 14 JUNE

The incident took place around 11.45 pm on Saturday when a large number of candidates gathered at the Pataliputra Railway Station to go to their exam centres—*SCREENGRAB*

Around 200 people threw stones and vandalised Patna's Pataliputra Railway Station over shortage of trains for candidates appearing for a government recruitment exam, forcing the police to use "mild force," officials said.

Officials, however, maintained that adequate train services were ensured for students, and added that "anti-social elements" might be behind the "ruckus" at the station.

The incident took place around 11.45 pm on Saturday when a large number of candidates gathered at the Pataliputra railway Station to go to their exam centres. The chaos continued until early Sunday. The exam is on 14 to 17 June.

"Last night, a large number of candidates appearing for the Excise Constable examination were at the station. There couls have been be some anti-social elements among them, who tried to create ruckus. Efforts are underway to identify the miscreants," East Central Railways Chief PRO Saraswati Chandra told reporters on Sunday.

Patna District Magistrate SM Thiyagarajan said that arrangements were made by the Railways for special trains."However, some anti-social elements started stoning. They were dispersed," he added.Patna Zone IG Jitendra Rana said that no serious injuries occurred during the incident.He said an FIR will be registered and action will be taken against the miscreants.

Bihar minister Madan Sahni described the incident as "unfortunate" and said that an investigation will be conducted. — PTI

However, some candidates cited "poor planning " by the Railways for the incident.

A candidate from Bhojpur district said that adequate arrangements were not made by the Railways for those appearing for the exam.

Another student from Saharsa district said that aspirants were forced to wait for several hours before

PROTECTING CONSUMERS

FSSAI notifies eight food firms for misleading claims

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on Sunday issued notices to eight food business firms for using misleading brand names, trade names and product claims violating the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

The companies served notices are Emami Healthy & Tasty, Health Aid, Troovy, The Healthy Factory, Healthy Master, Healthy Choice, Plan B and Neuherbs.

FSSAI said Emami Healthy & Tasty, the cooking oil arm of the Emami Group, was notified as its trade name is "likely to mislead consumers and violates FSSAI regulations."

Plan B which markets products as " vegan" drew FSSAI's attention for creating the impression that its products are vegan, without obtaining approval for vegan endorsement in its FSSAI licence.

The Healthy Factory's "Zero Maida Whole Wheat Bread" which contains fresh wheat flour and gluten has been flagged for misleading consumers. Its "zero maida pizza base" product faces similar scrutiny, with FSSAI noting the claim violates regulations.

Neuherbs' product line "True Vitamin" has been cited for using a trade name that is "neither defined nor recognised." Troovy's snack products like "Healthy Mix Veggie Chips", "Healthy Ragi Chips" and "Healthy Moong Dal Chips", have been flagged for making misleading "healthy" claims. FSSAI also flagged Healthy Master's tagline, "Vision to serve healthy", Healthy Choice's "Healthy food for Healthy life Poha", and Health Aid's brand name as it is likely to mislead consumers. — *PTI*

CBSE told to reveal expense for exams

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

- The case arose from an RTI query seeking details of answer books used in Class 10 and Class 12 Board exams during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 sessions

The Central Information Commission (CIC) has directed the CBSE to disclose "pointwise categorical" information permissible under the RTI Act about expenditure on exams and details of answer books, including the tendering and procurement process, for Class 10 and Class 12 examinations.

After setting aside the CBSE's earlier denial of information under the RTI, the CIC asked it to furnish revised replies and said that the information exempt from disclosure may be redacted or masked under Section 10 of the RTI Act, while any denial under Section 8(1)(d) should be properly justified.

The case arose from an RTI application seeking details of answer books used in Class 10 and Class 12 board examinations during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 sessions, including paper quality, number of pages, size, purchase cost, total expenditure, GST payments and details of the tender process for procurement of answer sheets.

In its response, the CBSE disclosed certain specifications of the answer books, stating that the paper used ranged from 60 GSM to 120 GSM, answer books contained 8, 20, 32, 40 or 48 pages and were available in sizes of 22 x 28 cm and 37.5 x 54.5 cm.

The board also said records regarding the weight of individual answer books were not maintained. However, information about purchase cost of answer books, the number purchased and total expenditure incurred on procurement was denied under Section 8(1)(e) of the RTI Act. — *PTI*

Lightning kills 8 in 6 Jharkhand districts

RANCHI, 14 JUNE

At least eight people, including three women and two boys, were killed by lightning in six districts of Jharkhand, police said on Sunday.

Of the eight, two each were killed in Ranchi and Garhwa districts, while the remaining were reported from Chatra, Giridih, Seraikela-Kharsawan, and Jamtara districts."Among the dead are two from Ranchi district. They were Jitu Mahli, 55, of Badhu village and Nirasho Devi, 33, of Katamkuli village. Both were struck by lightning while working in their fields," SI Sataydeo Prasad of Pithoria Police Station said. The bodies have been sent for autopsy.

In Garhwa, two persons, Reena Devi, 30, a resident of Sundi village in Kharaundhi Police Station area, and Ram Avtar Pal, 65, a resident of Mukundpur village in Ketar Police Station limits, were killed. "Reena Devi was struck by lightning when she took shelter under a tree," Kharaundhi Police Station in-charge Gulshan Kumar Gautam said.Ram Avtar Pal, a shepherd, was killed while he was grazing his sheep. — *PTI*

Pariyathukavu land row resolved, Keralam Dalits to get land

KOCHI, 14 JUNE

A longstanding land dispute involving Dalit families at Pariyathukavu near Kizhakkambalam in Ernakulam district has been settled after discussions led by the Kerala government. The affected families will now receive five cents of land each, along with a house at the same location.

The agreement followed a crucial meeting chaired by Higher Education Minister Roji M John, attended by representatives of the families, landowners, officials, and local leaders on Saturday night. Both sides reached a consensus, leading the agitation committee to call off protests.

The dispute involved Dalit families residing for decades on land claimed by private owners. Following a court eviction order, the families demanded rehabilitation, inciting political controversy. Addressing reporters, John said the agreement was reached considering both sides' interests, amid a court verdict.

The residents will be allotted five cents of land each, with access roads, and the government will build houses for them within a year. Families can stay in their current houses until new homes are ready. The settlement will be signed within two days and submitted to the Kerala High Court on 16 June.

Officials, including the Muvattupuzha RDO, will oversee the implementation. The meeting was attended by VP Sajeendran MLA, District Collector G Priyanka, and other officials. —*PTI*

Manipur DGP warns against firing at forces

IMPHAL/ CHURACHANDPUR, 14 JUNE

Manipur police chief Mukesh Singh has issued a stern warning that anyone firing at security forces or attempting to take the law into their own hands will face strict action.

Addressing the press after his first visit to Churachandpur district, Singh stated that approximately 70 per cent of looted weapons had already been recovered.

He said, "Anyone with arms who tries to take laws into their own hands will be dealt with very strictly. Those with weapons would be arrested. Those who try to fire at us will be dealt with in self-defence. Proactive operations will continue till the situation is normal."

Singh also noted that misinformation was spreading on social media. "We have a social media monitoring cell which takes action against those spreading false information that can lead to inter-community conflict. We are proactively engaging them and taking down those sites which are anti-social or anti-national," he said.

He visited Bishnupur and Churachandpur, holding meetings with police, paramilitary, and army officials. —*PTI*

Four, including minor, held for Delhi fire that killed three

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

Charred remains of two-wheelers and bicycles seen after a fire broke out in a five-storey residential building in the Tughlakabad Extension area in New Delhi—*PTI*

The Delhi Police has apprehended a 17-year-old girl and three others for their alleged involvement in a 12 June fire at a residential building in southeast Delhi's Govindpuri area that claimed lives of three and injured eight people, officials said on Sunday.

The fire broke out at around 2.20 am at the multi-storey building in Tughlakabad, engulfing the structure from the ground to the fifth floor.

The injured were shifted to AIIMS Trauma Centre and Safdarjung Hospital. Three of a family, Pankaj Pandey, his sister Sonia and grandmother Sushila Devi, died.

"Based on evidence, police concluded that the blaze was a deliberate act," DCP (Southeast) Tiwari said.

Subsequently, a 17-year-old girl from Govindpuri was apprehended. Questioning her led the police to a 27-year-old woman, Sarita, who allegedly instigated her to set ablaze a scooter parked in the building, due to a monetary dispute with a resident of the building called Deepak. Two others, Niranjan, 33, and his brother Rajkumar, 27, were involved and were held. —*PTI*

ARUNACHAL'S PPA OPPOSES NEW LAW

ITANAGAR, 14 JUNE

- PPA chief Nabam Vivek said the party passed a resolution against the law during its state executive meeting on 11 June. A panel headed by ex-justice Katakey submitted the draft rules to the state admin on 8 June

The People's Party of Arunachal (PPA) has strongly opposed the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act (APRA), demanding that the state government immediately convene a special assembly session to discuss its relevance.

PPA president Nabam Vivek on Saturday said the party passed a formal resolution against the law during its state executive meeting on 11 June.

A high-powered committee headed by retired justice BP Katakey submitted the draft rules to the state government on 8 June, nearly 48 years after the legislation was enacted.

The Act, passed in 1978, prohibits religious conversion through force, fraud, or inducement, but remained unimplemented due to the absence of operational rules.

Vivek questioned the government's intent behind collecting religious data under the draft rules of the act. — *PTI*

SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE

J'khand's Bhagaiya, Kuchai silks, Munda jewellery get GI tag

NABARD said it played a catalytic role in identifying the unique characteristics of these traditional products—*WIKICOMMONS*

RANCHI, 14 JUNE

Jharkhand's Bhagaiya silk, Kuchai silk, Munda jewellery, and bamboo craft products have received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, an official statement said on Sunday.

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) said it was a significant milestone for the artisans and weavers of Jharkhand.

"Four products promoted through NABARD interventions have secured GI tags. These are Bhagaiya silk, Kuchai silk, Munda jewellery, and Jharkhand bamboo craft, marking a major achievement in the promotion of the state's heritage and rural economy," it said.

The GI tag is the result of years of efforts undertaken by the bank in collaboration with producer groups, artisans, SHGs, farmer organisations, government departments, and technical institutions, the statement said.

NABARD claimed it played a catalytic role in identifying the unique characteristics of these traditional products, organising producers, strengthening value chains, supporting documentation,

- The GI tag is the result of years of efforts by NABARD in collaboration with producer groups, artisans, SHGs, farmers and the state government

facilitating stakeholder consultations and providing help throughout the GI registration process.

The recognition of Bhagaiya silk and Kuchai silk brings national attention to Jharkhand's sericulture traditions. These silk varieties, deeply rooted in local knowledge systems and indigenous craftsmanship, represent generations of skill passed down within rural communities, the statement said. The GI tag will help protect their authenticity, improve market visibility and enable producers to command premiums.

"The GI tag accorded to Munda jewellery celebrates the artistic traditions of Munda tribals. Characterised by its motifs, craftsmanship and cultural significance, the jewellery embodies the tribal heritage of Jharkhand. The GI tag will help preserve this traditional knowledge," the statement said. — *PTI*

FIFA FEVER

Football fans carry cut-outs of Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo, Brazil's Neymar and Argentina's Lionel Messi for decorations during the ongoing FIFA World Cup 2026, in Kolkata *– PTI*

Diesel curbs raise concerns for hospitals & IT parks

The government move to restrict diesel purchases through petrol pumps is raising concerns among hospitals, IT campuses, data centres and industrial facilities that rely heavily on diesel generators not only as emergency backup but also as a regular source of power during peak-demand periods.

The government on June 11 barred industrial, commercial and institutional consumers from purchasing diesel at petrol pumps and limited sales through retail outlets to 200 litres per customer or vehicle per day, a move aimed at conserving supplies and preventing diversion of fuel meant for retail consumers.

Industry executives said the restrictions could disrupt fuel procurement for sectors where diesel generators remain critical to operations.

Hospitals are among the most vulnerable. Large healthcare facilities typically maintain multiple diesel generator sets capable of powering entire campuses during grid disruptions and often run them proactively during surgeries, intensive-care operations and other critical procedures where even momentary voltage fluctuations can pose risks to patients.

"Many hospitals do not depend exclusively on grid electricity for critical functions. Diesel generators are an integral part of operational planning because uninterrupted power is non-negotiable," said an executive at a hospital chain. Data centres, IT parks and telecom facilities also rely extensively on diesel-based backup systems to meet uptime commitments. Industry officials said many facilities routinely top up diesel inventories from nearby fuel stations to ensure uninterrupted operations.

"Peak hour power tariffs in some states are higher than the cost of generating electricity using diesel gensets. And so many IT companies rely on diesel gensets to meet power demand during peak hours," another industry executive said.

Industry executives said the restrictions could disrupt fuel procurement for sectors where diesel generators remain critical to operations *–CHATGPT*

The restrictions could also increase operating costs for some industrial and commercial consumers. During periods of peak electricity demand, power purchased from the grid can become significantly more expensive than captive diesel generation, prompting some facilities to switch part of their load to generator sets to manage costs and maintain reliability.

The government said the measures were prompted by "abnormal increases" in diesel and petrol sales at retail outlets as industrial and institutional consumers shifted purchases from bulk supply channels to lower-priced retail pumps, creating risks of local shortages. Under the order, such consumers will be required to source fuel through dedicated consumer pumps and bulk supply arrangements rather than retail outlets.

Industry representatives are seeking exemptions and operational clarifications for essential services, arguing that hospitals, telecom networks, data centres and other critical infrastructure require assured access to diesel supplies regardless of prevailing market conditions.

Executives said organisations with established bulk fuel contracts are likely to face limited disruption, but institutions dependent on flexible retail purchases may need to rapidly overhaul procurement practices if the restrictions are activated.

The restrictions, which will be in place for up to 90 days, follows abnormal demand growth, particularly that of diesel, in some pockets after bulk users started buying fuel from petrol pumps due to the pricing difference. While diesel at petrol pumps costs Rs 95.20 a litre in Delhi, bulk sale are priced at Rs 134.50.

The differential arose as state-owned oil companies modulated retail prices to insulate common users from the spike in cost that followed the West Asia crisis in late February. While bulk users such as telecom towers and industries using diesel for power generation and other feedstock needs are charged market price, the retail pump rates are way lower than cost.

Commercial customers like trucking companies and state road transport buses too had been tapping pumps for their needs, resulting in abnormal rise in demand in some pockets. The price differential has also led to a shift in sales pattern with volumes shifting to PSU petrol pumps from private sector outlets that priced petrol and diesel at higher rates.

In May, three state-owned firms IOC, BPCL, and HPCL saw a 4.8 per cent jump in petrol sales and 6.4 per cent surge in diesel. *—PTI*

SALAR ساڈا بنگلور

41 villages unite to restore lifelines in parched Beed

- Residents of more than 40 villages in Beed district of Maharashtra's drought-prone Marathwada region have come together to improve the water storage capacity

Setting an example of community involvement for a positive cause, residents of more than 40 villages in Beed district of Maharashtra's drought-prone Marathwada region have come together to improve the water storage capacity of local rivers through desiltation.

The target is to remove the accumulated silt and sediments from five rivers - Papnashini, Gunwara, Saraswati, Wan and Lingi - that flow through these villages and the surrounding areas, with their collective running distance of 108 kilometres in this region.

Voluntary group Global Vikas Trust (GVT) took up this initiative and brought together people from 41 villages, located in Parli, Ambajogai, Dharur and Majalgaon talukas of Beed, for the task.

"The project started in January this year. Out of the 108 km of the collective length of the rivers flowing through this region, silt has been removed from 92 km of area. The cleared space will help accommodate 364.80 crore litres of water," Dattatray Kale, spokesperson of GVT, told PTI.

The total cost of the project is around Rs 16 crore, which is being provided by private companies as part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) funding. But the villagers have crowdfunded Rs 54 lakh so that it develops a sense of belongingness and attachment to the project among them, he said.

The villagers held gram sabhas to inform everyone about the project, followed by the formation of coordination committees to address local issues. Demarcation of boundaries for the desiltation work was undertaken before the activity started, he said.

Since the riverbeds were earlier covered with silt and left limited space for water storage, during heavy rainfall, nearby farms used to get inundated, which would damage the crops. Now, the debris and stones collected from the sites are used for the construction of embankments.

"This will protect the farms located along the rivers during heavy rains. Roads have also been built using this debris," he said.

However, the villagers do not need to contribute to the desilting work in terms of physical labour as the task is done by the machinery and equipment deployed for the task. The process is not merely limited to making space to store more water in the river. After the silt removal, detailed surveys are conducted using LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) technology to identify underground aquifers. Global River Aquashaft (GRA), a structure designed to recharge groundwater by channelling large volumes of water into underground aquifers, is also implemented here. Installation of 540 GRAs has been completed so far under the project. Each GRA has the potential to recharge approximately eight crore litres of water into the ground, the official said.

Where suitable aquifers are found, borewells are drilled up to a depth of around 200 feet. Perforated pipes fitted with protective mesh are installed within the borewells.

Around the pipe, a pit is excavated and filled with large stones and sand. This filtration arrangement enables clean river water to percolate naturally and flow through the pipes into the underground aquifer, significantly enhancing the groundwater recharge, the official said.

Beed Collector Vivek Johnson said the administration has been extending cooperation for the implementation of the project.

"This project will help improve the groundwater table and increase water availability there. The district administration will provide saplings to the teams working here to create vegetation along the river banks," he said.

Mayank Gandhi, founder of GVT, said they were working towards improving the income of farmers in the Marathwada region."Being a drought-prone area, the income of farmers here is low. The region reports a high number of farmer suicide cases. Availability of water will definitely help raise farmers' income here," he said. *—PTI*

Water storage capacity work in Beed district, Maharashtra *–PTI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Children on social media at higher risk of mental illness

- A new study found clear risks from heavier social media use on young people's mental health. This comes as the United Kingdom and other countries make moves to follow Australia's lead in restricting access to social media for under 16s.

A new study, published in the Medical Journal of Australia, found clear risks from heavier social media use on young people's mental health.

This comes as the United Kingdom and other countries make moves to follow Australia's lead in restricting access to social media for under 16s. Findings from a recent poll of Australian parents about these efforts also suggest that the law is changing parents' views and practices around their children's social media use.

A DEBATE OVER AGE

When Australia restricted access to social media for young people under 16 last December, there was considerable debate about whether 16 was the appropriate age threshold.

One large 2022 study from the UK found that increases in adolescents' social media use over time were associated with lower life satisfaction during specific age periods – 11 to 13 years of age for girls and 14 to 15 years of age for boys. It focused on life satisfaction and did not assess symptoms of mental health.

DIGGING DEEPER

The new study used data from 1,195 students in Melbourne whom researchers have followed annually from 12 to 18 years of age.

It examined whether their social media use was related to later mental health problems, and statistically accounted for a range of individual and family factors that are known to influence both social media use and mental health. Therefore, researchers were able to reduce alternative explanations and strengthen confidence in our findings – even though we couldn't prove causation.

The study found that adolescents who spent more than two hours per day on social media had a higher risk of developing mental health problems one year later, compared with those using social media for less than one hour per day. The mental health problems included elevated symptoms of depression and poor wellbeing.

Importantly, the risks of social media use were not evenly experienced across adolescence.

The strongest effects consistently emerged in adolescents aged 12 to 13 for both girls and boys. The estimated risk for symptoms of depression and anxiety, as well as poor wellbeing and self-harm, was roughly twice as large compared with adolescents aged 14 to 16 and those aged 17 to 18.

Overall, the estimated size of effects was modest. But in girls aged 12 to 13, more than two hours of daily social media use was associated with around 11 additional cases of high depressive symptoms per 100 adolescents.

Even small effects can become meaningful at a population level when large numbers of young people are spending more than two hours a day on social media.

Increases in adolescents' social media use over time were associated with lower life satisfaction during specific age periods *– AI*

AGE RESTRICTIONS ALONE AREN'T ENOUGH

Combined with other research, the study suggests that younger adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the potential harms of social media, with the strongest effects emerging during early adolescence. As a result, Australia's social media law is expected to have the greatest impact on the mental health of younger adolescents.

However, age-based restrictions alone are unlikely to eliminate all risks associated with adolescent social media use. The study found evidence that some risks for mental health problems -- namely elevated symptoms of depression -- persisted for young people up to 18 years of age.

This highlights the need for continued supports for older adolescents.

This includes holding social media platforms accountable for algorithms and features that promote compulsive engagement and exposure to harmful content. One way to achieve this is through Australia's proposed digital duty of care reform.

It also involves improving education on digital literacy and safety at schools and supporting parents to help young people develop healthier online habits.

CHANGING THE NORM

A recent poll of more than 2,000 parents of 0- to 17-year-olds about the law restricting access to social media in Australia found that 59 per cent of parents felt the law supported them to set rules around social media use. Also, 39 per cent of parents reported that the law has changed their view on when children should first have their social media accounts, with 16 years being the most commonly endorsed age (38 per cent).

These findings demonstrate that public health policies can influence what is considered appropriate or expected behaviour. While evidence on the impacts of Australia's social media law is still emerging, it has already influenced global discussions on adolescent social media use.

Debates about age-based social media restrictions are now occurring in many countries. And the conversation is increasingly shifting from whether social media affects young people's mental health to when young people may be most vulnerable and how we as a society should respond. *—PTI*

Rome sees pro- & anti-migration rallies

ROME, 13 JUNE

Tens of thousands of people joined rival anti- and pro-migration demonstrations in Rome on Saturday amid growing debate over immigration in Italy. The anti-migration march was organised after the far-right "Remigration and Reconquest" initiative secured 50,000 signatures, enough to trigger a parliamentary debate. Protesters sang the national anthem, while some raised fascist salutes and chanted "Duce", a reference to Benito Mussolini. A rival pro-migration rally drew tens of thousands of participants, including trade unions, with some carrying Palestinian flags. Police maintained a heavy presence to keep the two groups apart, and no major violence was reported. The protests have increased pressure on Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. —*PTI*

Taiwan website invites Chinese to leak intel

TAIPEI, 14 JUNE

Taiwan's National Security Bureau announced the launch of a secure online platform for Chinese nationals to report intelligence tips, amid ongoing tensions with Beijing. The agency said the webpage aims to provide a safe channel for Chinese citizens to share information, noting an increase in recent approaches to Taiwanese agencies. The statement highlighted China's economic struggles and social issues, which have fuelled public discontent. Taiwan officials referenced practices from US, UK, and Israeli intelligence agencies. Last year, the CIA released Mandarin videos inviting Chinese officials to share information. China recently launched an online platform to report "Taiwan independence" activities. —*PTI*

Haitian security official kidnapped by armed gang

SAN JUAN, 13 JUNE

Armed men in Haiti have kidnapped James Boyard, the Defence Ministry's cabinet director and police inspector general, in what is the country's highest-ranking kidnapping in recent years, according to sources. Boyard, also a political scientist, was seized Thursday in Bourdon, a relatively safe area of Port-au-Prince. The city is largely controlled by the gang coalition Viv Ansanm, designated as a terrorist organisation. Boyard has helped rebuild Haiti's armed forces and assess police reforms. It is unclear who kidnapped him or if a ransom was demanded. Experts suggest the kidnapping was carefully planned, possibly involving close security contacts. —*PTI*

Nepal FM begins China visit to strengthen ties

BEIJING, 14 JUNE

Nepal Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal arrived in China on Sunday on a four-day visit aimed at strengthening bilateral relations and expanding economic cooperation. The visit comes amid expectations of a reset in ties following political changes in Nepal after the Rastriya Swatantra Party's victory in March elections. Khanal is scheduled to hold talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and meet senior Chinese leaders. According to Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian, discussions will focus on enhancing mutual trust, deepening cooperation, strengthening the strategic partnership and advancing projects under the Belt and Road Initiative. During his visit, Khanal will also attend an investment conference in Beijing to promote foreign investment in Nepal. —*PTI*

Beirut attacked; Iran tells US to rein in Israel

Peace deal hangs in balance; Bibi says he was retaliating; Iran says restrain 'rabid dog' Israel

Just ahead of when he said a peace deal with Iran would be signed, US President Donald Trump posted an AI image of himself warning 'you're getting discombobulated' —*TRUTHSOCIAL@REALDONALDTRUMP*

TEHRAN/TEL AVIV/ WASHINGTON, 14 JUNE

After Israel bombed Lebanon's capital Beirut, Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps warned that the "these crimes will not go unanswered", even as US President Donald Trump called for restraint ahead of a potential US-Iran deal.

Israel's strikes threatened to hamper negotiations over the deal, which in its current form is a deep disappointment to Israel's government. The last time Israel struck the Beirut suburbs a week ago, it set off the most serious escalation of fighting between Iran and Israel since the tenuous ceasefire took hold 7 April.

Iran's powerful Parliamentary Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf warned on X that Israel's strikes on Beirut's suburbs show that "America either lacks the will to fulfil its commitments or the ability to do so."

"If you lack the will and ability to fulfill your commitments, speaking of continuing the path is not possible," he stated, an apparent reference to the potential deal.

Similarly, Ebrahim Rezaei, spokesman for the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission, has warned the enemies against any "miscalculations".

"If this rabid dog is not restrained, it will bite us while the ink on any agreement is still drying," he wrote.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the strikes were in response to Hezbollah attacks on the north of the country. Israel's military said earlier in the day that Hezbollah had launched three projectiles into northern Israel, releasing footage where a boom followed by a smoke.

However, Israel's retaliation was anything but proportional. A five-story building with shops at the bottom floor was badly damaged.

The strikes come as Qatari negotiators arrived in Tehran, hoping to push for a peace deal signing.

"This could be the beginning of a long and beautiful peace," Trump had said of the deal on Sunday. However, Israel's discontent has been growing, as Pakistan and other Gulf countries have sidelined it in the negotiating process.

"Israel will not tolerate firing into its territory," a statement from Netanyahu and Defence Minister Israel Katz said on Sunday. Trump has pressed Netanyahu to stop hitting Lebanon while a deal is near, but the Prime Minister has defied him. —*Agencies*

Footage released by Israeli military shows a massive airstrike on Beirut's suburbs on Sunday —*SCREENGRAB*

Today marks the anniversary of the beginning of the military aggression by the Zionist regime (Israel), with the cooperation of the US... (But) the steadfast will, resistance, and self-sacrifice of the Iranian nation transformed the enemy's dream into disgrace, failure, and ignominy

-Esmaeil Baqaei, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spox on 12-Day war

This (Iran-US deal) is one of the most shocking failures of Israel's foreign and security policy, and it is entirely on Netanyahu's account... He... lost the American's trust in the middle of the war.. (and) failed to convince them to bomb Iran's oil and energy facilities... He failed to rally global opinion

-Yair Lapid, Former Israeli PM and LoP

GAZA DEATH TOLL TOPS 73,000 AS ISRAEL KILLS 5

DEIR AL-BALAH, 14 JUNE

Gaza's Health Ministry says the Palestinian death toll from the Israel-Hamas war has surpassed 73,000 as Israel continued to strike the enclave despite a ceasefire reached in October.

On Sunday, the Ministry said that there were five deaths: two in the southern city of Khan Younis and one in central Gaza, in addition to two who died of earlier wounds. The total number of deaths since the beginning of the war is now 73,001, said Zaher al-Waheidi, head of the ministry's records department and Hamza Salem from the ministry's public relations department.

Over 1,73,200 people have been wounded since the start of the war, which was ignited by the Hamas-led 7 October, 2023 attack into Israel that attack killed some 1,200 people.

An Israeli strike on Saturday evening killed two Palestinians in Khan Younis. The casualties were taken to Nasser hospital, according to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society.

The Israeli military did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Health Ministry, part of the Hamas-led government, is staffed by medical professionals and maintains detailed records viewed as generally reliable by United Nations agencies and independent experts. It says women and children make up around half of all fatalities, but doesn't differentiate between civilians and militants. —*PTI*

Palestinians inspect buildings that were destroyed in an Israeli airstrike, at al-Maghazi refugee camp, central Gaza Strip, on Friday —*PTI*

PREPS FOR TRUMP'S BIRTHDAY

Ahead of his 80th birthday on Sunday, US President Donald Trump prepares a spectacle that once would have seemed unfathomable: a UFC cage-fighting show on the storied South Lawn of the White House. Already, the opening ceremony featured bike stunts, concerts and fireworks – a glimpse of what is to come. Officials say that nearly 4,000 people will attend. The UFC fight is estimated to cost nearly $60 million—*X@WHITEHOUSE*

Ahead of G7, Carney says 'middle powers' should look beyond US

DUBLIN, 13 JUNE

In a high-profile diplomatic visit to Ireland ahead of the upcoming G7 summit, Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney said "middle power" countries shouldn't compete for favour with America.

Carney said that Canada and the European Union have a combined population that is more than twice that of the US, with a similarly sized economy and a collective defence budget that is twice that of China's.

"In a world of great power rivalry, middle powers have a choice — to compete for favour or to combine to create a third path with impact," Carney said at Trinity College in Dublin.

"The post-Cold War world's rules-based order is breaking down. Multilateral institutions have weakened. Economic integration, from which we have benefitted is being weaponised. The international trading system, which we've relied upon for decades, is under threat," he said. "The G7, if it ever did run the world, no longer runs the world or pretends to."

Simultaneously, he said that the "strands" of a new world order could be woven at the G7 Summit.

Alongside Irish Taoiseach (head of government) Micheal Martin, Carney added that "the new world order will be built starting with Europe."

Carney made similar comments at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, when he declared the global rules-based order was over and condemned coercion by great powers on smaller countries.

The comments come ahead of the G7 summit on 15-17 June, in the French town of Evian-les-Bains, on Lake Geneva. —*Agencies*

Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Micheal Martin and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney in Dublin, on Sunday—*X @MARKJCARNEY*

UK detains Russian 'shadow fleet' oil tanker

LONDON, 14 JUNE

Armed British forces boarded and detained a sanctioned oil tanker suspected of being part of Russia's "shadow fleet" in the English Channel on Sunday, in what the UK described as its first operation of this kind. The "shadow fleet" ships oil in violation of international sanctions over Russia's war on Ukraine,

Royal Marine commandos rappelled from helicopters onto the Cameroon-flagged Smyrtos, which is suspected of transporting Russian oil in violation of sanctions imposed over Moscow's war in Ukraine. The vessel has been detained off England's south coast and will remain under investigation, the Defence Ministry said.

British forces board a tanker suspected of being part of Russia's Shadow fleet', in the English Channel, on Sunday —*X @GENGJENKINSRM*

Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the operation delivered "yet another blow to Russia's" war economy.

The operation was carried out in close coordination with French authorities, who have previously intercepted vessels linked to Russia's shadow fleet, believed to comprise hundreds of ships. The Smyrtos left Russia's Baltic port of Ust-Luga on 5 June and was bound for Egypt. —*PTI*

Ukrainian drones kill 1 in Russia

Moscow, 14 June

A Ukrainian drone attack killed one person and injured nine in Russia's southwestern Oryol region overnight, local officials said on Sunday, as Kyiv intensified strikes on military and energy targets deep inside Russia.

Oryol Governor Andrei Klychkov said the drone hit a residential building in the regional capital. Separately, authorities in Russia's Yaroslavl region, around 700 km from the Ukrainian border, said fuel storage facilities caught fire after being struck by a drone. —*PTI*

Swiss voters reject proposal to cap population at 10 M

GENEVA, 14 JUNE

Swiss voters appear to have rejected a right-wing proposal to cap the country's population at 10 million, according to preliminary results from Sunday's referendum. Early figures showed nearly 53 per cent voting against the initiative, with turnout exceeding 57 per cent, though results from several cantons were still pending.

The proposal, backed by the populist Swiss People's Party, sought to limit population growth amid concerns over immigration, pressure on housing, infrastructure and public services. Critics argued that the measure could damage Switzerland's close economic ties with the European Union and hurt sectors dependent on foreign labour, including healthcare, finance, technology and pharmaceuticals.

Had it passed, the government would have been required to cap the population by 2050 and potentially restrict asylum, residency permits and family reunification. The population has grown to 9.1 million, with foreign-born residents accounting for about one-third of the total. —*PTI*

CREW FORGOT TO ATTACH WIRE

Brazil woman dies in bungee jump horror

SAO PAOLO, 14 JUNE

In a shocking incident in Brazil, a 21-year-old woman plunged to her death during a bungee jump in the city of Limeira, in Sao Paolo state, after attendants forgot to attach the safety rope to her.

Identified locally as Maria Eduarda Rodrigues de Freitas, the woman was at a location called Skeleton Bridge with her boyfriend. Videos on social media show her being thrown off the bridge by staff, followed by concerned onlookers shouting that the safety cord was not attached to her. de Freitas fell 130 feet to her death in a ravine before any steps could be taken to help her. Emergency services confirmer her death and her body was transferred to Legal Medical Institute for further examination.

Maria Eduarda Rodrigues de Freitas fell 130 feet to her death in Brazil as officials forgot to tie the safety cord —*SCREENGRAB*

Authorities confirmed that six people were arrested at the scene as the Civil Police launched a probe which could lead to organisers being criminally charged. Safety protocols and staff accountability are also being reviewed.

Murilo Flix, Mayor of Limeira, said the city council would file a complaint with Brazil's federal government as de Freitas's death sparked concerns around safety measures at tourism destinations. Flix said someone must be held responsible for "lack of access control" to a site of "known risk" that still doesn't have safety measures. —*Salar News*

FPIs withdraw Rs 62,800 cr in 14 days

Foreign investors continue selling, driven by geopolitical tensions and weak rupee

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

Foreign investors remained sellers in Indian equities, dumping more than Rs 62,853 crore of shares in the first two weeks of June amid heightened geopolitical tensions, concerns over global economic growth and persistent weakness in the rupee.

With the latest outflows, total withdrawals by Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) from Indian equities have surged to Rs 2.87 lakh crore so far in 2026, surpassing the Rs 1.66 lakh crore pulled out during the entire calendar year 2025, according to data from the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL).

According to NSDL data, FPIs have remained net sellers in every month of 2026 except February. They withdrew Rs 35,962 crore in January before turning net buyers in February, investing Rs 22,615 crore, marking the highest monthly inflow in 17 months. The trend, however, reversed sharply in March, when foreign investors pulled out a record Rs 1.17 lakh crore. The selling pressure continued in April, with net outflows of Rs 60,847 crore, and in May, with withdrawals of Rs 32,963 crore. In June, FPIs have already withdrawn Rs 62,853 crore during the first two weeks of the month.

Latest outflows, total withdrawals by Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) from Indian equities have surged to Rs 2.87 lakh crore so far in 2026 –AI

Himanshu Srivastava, Principal, Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said investors continue to navigate an environment marked by elevated uncertainty around the interest-rate trajectory of major central banks, geopolitical developments and concerns over global growth.

Srivastava added that India's relatively rich valuations compared with several emerging-market peers may also have prompted foreign investors to adopt a more selective approach towards allocations.

However, the pace of FPIs outflows moderated significantly in the latter half of last week, indicating that while risk aversion remained elevated, the intensity of foreign selling eased gradually. On Friday, FPIs sold equities worth only Rs 1,082 crore in the cash market.

In contrast to the equity outflows, FPIs invested more than Rs 13,200 crore in debt securities through the FAR route during the first fortnight of June, taking total investments through this channel to nearly Rs 28,000 crore so far this year. —*PTI*

Jio Platforms enters global top 20 in patent rank

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

Reliance Industries' Jio Platforms has become the only Indian technology innovator to enter the global top 20 in the World Intellectual Property Organisation's latest Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) rankings, released on Sunday. Jio Platforms (JPL) climbed 320 places on the list for the year 2025, making it one of the fastest-rising to stand among global technology leaders, such as Huawei, Samsung, LG, Panasonic, Nokia, Google, Apple and Microsoft. Jio's patent portfolio focuses on next-generation digital technologies. As of March 2026, JPL filed 6,817 patents worldwide—2,393 in India and 4,424 internationally. The company said 1,009 patents have been granted globally, with 538 in India.—*PTI*

Gold hinges on major central bank's policy shifts

NEW DELHI, 20 MAY

Gold prices are likely to stay within a range next week as investors await key central bank meetings, US-Iran negotiations, and crude oil movements, analysts said. The Bank of Japan, US Federal Reserve, and Bank of England meetings, along with inflation data from the UK, Eurozone, Germany, and Japan, will be watched for interest rate trends. Analysts highlighted that the US-Iran agreement's finalisation will be a major trigger. "A close eye will remain on the finalisation of the US-Iran deal. If signed, then we may see an extended rally in risk assets that may lift gold and silver. However, any escalation would be negative for markets," said Pranav Mer, Vice President, JM Financial Services Ltd. On the domestic front, gold futures for August declined Rs 5,066 (3.2 per cent) to around Rs 1.50 lakh per 10 grams, while silver for July fell Rs 2,351 (nearly 1 per cent) to Rs 2.46 lakh per kilogram. Prices remained volatile but recovered some losses after reports indicated no immediate military action against Iran. Internationally, Comex gold futures dropped USD 126.5 to USD 4,238.8 per ounce, and silver fell USD 1.13 to USD 67.97 per ounce. Mer added that prices rebounded over 5 per cent amid a weaker USD and declining bond yields but cautioned traders until the official signing of the deal. —*PTI*

WATER CONSERVATION PROMISED

'More firms to make memory chips in India'

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

New companies are likely to invest in India to manufacture memory chips while existing investors scale up production to address the demand-supply gap, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said in an interview.

Strong demand for memory cards and advanced chips has tightened global supplies and pushed prices higher, prompting manufacturers to ramp up investment and production capacity.

This rise has increased production costs for electronic products including smartphones and laptops. Data centre investments in India are expected to surpass USD 200 billion, requiring billions of gigabytes of storage capacity.

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw –PTI

Vaishnaw identified three factors drawing hyperscalers to produce in India, notably including the resilience of its power grid. "Many countries, including some rich ones, have grids that are 30–50 years old, causing imbalances when data centre power requirements grow significantly. That is very different from the robustness of our grid," he said.

Regarding environmental concerns, the minister said India is following stringent norms and that innovations in power and water use — including cooling methods that cut water consumption by around 70 per cent — are underway.

A Mordor Intelligence study estimates data centre water consumption in India at 150.30 billion litres in 2025, projected to reach 358.66 billion litres by 2030. —*PTI*

Mcap of 8 of top-10 most valued firms surges; ICICI Bank leads

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most valued firms surged by Rs 1.90 lakh crore last week, with ICICI Bank leading, in tandem with a rally in equities.

Last week, Sensex jumped 1,284.61 points, or 1.73 per cent, and Nifty surged 256.2 points, or 1 per cent.

Investor confidence improved on optimism surrounding a potential US–Iran peace deal, which raised hopes of easing geopolitical tensions and stabilising energy markets, he added.

From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro and Hindustan Unilever were the winners, while Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) faced erosion from their market capitalisation.

ICICI Bank added Rs 56,223 crore, taking its valuation to Rs 9,61,297.77 crore.

Reliance Industries remained the most valued, followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, TCS, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, Hindustan Unilever and LIC. —*PTI*

TATA TRUST TO HIKE PHILATHROPIC SPEND TO RS 2,000 CRORE

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

Tata Trusts will increase its philanthropic spending to about Rs 2,000 crore in the current fiscal, its CEO Siddharth Sharma has said.

He pushed back against media coverage focused only on the "chaos" within the congregation of charities that control Tata Sons, the holding company Tata Group.

Sharma further said, "For FY 25-26 alone, the philanthropic spending of the Tata Trusts was Rs 1,600 crores approx., slated to go up to Rs 2,000 crores in the current fiscal." —*PTI*

NSE likely to file IPO papers with Sebi next week

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

The long-awaited initial public offering (IPO) of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) is set to move a step closer, with the country's largest stock exchange expected to file its preliminary papers with Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) next week, people aware of the matter said. This comes after NSE's board approved the proposed IPO on 6 February, following receipt of Sebi's no-objection certificate (NOC).

The public issue will be entirely an offer for sale (OFS), with no fresh issue component. According to people familiar with the development, the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) is likely to be filed on 15 June or 16 June.

The exchange has a broad-based shareholder base comprising domestic financial institutions, insurance companies, foreign investors and individual shareholders. Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) is the single largest shareholder in NSE, holding a 10.72 per cent stake. State Bank of India (SBI) and its subsidiary, SBI Capital Markets, together own around a 7.5 per cent stake in the exchange. Among foreign investors with significant holdings are Aranda Investments, a subsidiary of Temasek, and Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB).

The filing would mark a major milestone for NSE, whose listing plans had remained on hold for nearly a decade due to regulatory issues, including the co-location controversy. NSE had filed its settlement application in June 2025 in connection with the co-location case, in which certain brokers were accused of receiving preferential access to the exchange's trading systems. It offered to pay Rs 1,388 crore to settle the matter. —*PTI*

India's Russian oil imports rise in May as refineries boost buying

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

India remained the world's second-largest buyer of Russian fossil fuels in May, importing an estimated 5.8 billion euros (USD 6.7 billion) worth of Russian hydrocarbons as refiners stepped up crude purchases from Moscow, European Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) said in a report.

Crude oil accounted for about 83 per cent of India's imports from Russia during the month, valued at 4.8 billion euros, while oil products and coal imports stood at 550 million euros and 429 million euros, respectively.

Unloaded volumes at the Vadinar refinery in Gujarat rose 36 per cent from April levels, while deliveries to the Jamnagar refining complex in the state increased 14 per cent.

–AI

The state-run refiners New Mangalore and Visakhapatnam refineries, which had halted Russian crude imports at the end of November 2025, continued buying Russian oil after restarting purchases in March. Russian crude deliveries to New Mangalore rose 13 per cent month-on-month in May, while imports at Visakhapatnam jumped 42 per cent. The Paradip refinery on Odisha's east coast also unloaded its highest volume of Russian crude in two years.

India is now one of Russia's largest buyers for oil since Western sanctions and trade restrictions reshaped energy flow, following Russia's strikes on Ukraine. —*PTI*

INDIA KEY TO AMAZON'S FUTURE AS EXPANSION ENTERS TOP GEAR

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

Amazon India is currently in the "most aggressive phase of expansion" yet, according to country head Samir Kumar, who stated the company is committed to long-term market and customer success. The firm announced a USD 35 billion investment by 2030, building on USD 40 billion already invested, to support growth, AI digitisation, exports, and job creation. Kumar said, "If you look at our investments, we are one of the largest in India... USD 35 billion over five years, USD 80 billion of exports, and expansion into 100 cities with 1,000 micro fulfillment centres."

Despite concerns over market complexities and competition, Kumar emphasised the company's focus on improving consumer experience, stating, "I continue to focus on building the right experience for our Indian consumers." He added, "We are building for the long run and investing in India on a big scale."

Amazon's diversified presence includes ecommerce, digital payments, cloud, entertainment, devices, logistics, and quick commerce through Amazon Now, competing with platforms like Blinkit, Zepto, and Flipkart.

Kumar believes Amazon's expanding network will help it lead India's quick commerce market, dismissing worries of cannibalising traditional ecommerce. —*PTI*

LIC wants to lead the market ahead of platinum jubilee

NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE

LIC CEO and MD R Doraiswamy stated that despite increasing competition, the Corporation will focus on strengthening its leadership while contributing to national development as it approaches its platinum jubilee. LIC commands nearly 60 per cent of the life insurance market and manages assets over Rs 57 lakh crore, with real estate valued at around Rs 60,000 crore.

Reflecting on LIC's journey since 1956, he said, "As the economy grows, LIC grows. LIC growth helps the economy grow." He added LIC's evolution is closely linked to India's development, with a history rooted in dedication and hard work.

Looking ahead, he said, "Our goal is to retain leadership and be a major player in the future." LIC has overseas operations in 13 countries and is exploring establishing a fintech arm to meet digital needs, engaging with fintech and insurtech players. —*PTI*

INDIGENOUS PILOT PLANT

IIT-M makes plant to process 100T of e-waste

CHENNAI, 14 JUNE

Researchers at IIT Madras have developed an indigenous pilot plant capable of processing 100 tonnes of electronic waste per year, offering a scalable model for clean metal recovery from discarded electronics.

The facility, located at Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) in Tiruchirapalli, is designed to treat printed circuit boards (PCBs) — among the most hazardous and metal-rich components of e-waste. PCBs contain significant quantities of copper, lead, and tin, metals that can leach into soil and groundwater if not handled properly, posing long-term environmental and public health risks.

–PTI

The plant uses a single-acid, zero-discharge process to recover these metals without polluting soil, water, or air. Built entirely by Indian firms and based on IIT Madras research, it features automated operations with high levels of safety integrated into its design — distinguishing it from existing technologies in the field.

The development comes as India generates nearly five million metric tonnes of electronic waste annually. The technology was funded through an internal exploratory research grant from IIT Madras.

Professor S. Pushpavanam, YBG Varma Chair Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering, said the pilot plant offers a ready-to-scale model for clean metal recovery aligned with the goals of Make in India, the circular economy, and critical minerals security.

"It also provides a rare example of academic research translating into technology development," he said, adding that the project demonstrates a viable path from lab-scale chemistry to a fully functional industrial unit. —*PTI*

Bombay HC upholds RBI official's removal for unauthorised absence

MUMBAI, 14 JUNE

The Bombay High Court has upheld the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) decision to remove senior assistant Animesh Bakuli, citing his unauthorised absence as "grave misconduct" detrimental to public interest. The court, in its June 10 order, stated that Bakuli's prolonged absence from his responsible role would "undoubtedly be detrimental to public interest" and justify his dismissal.

Bakuli challenged his February 2023 compulsory retirement, seeking to quash the order and demanding the release of blocked payments and allowances since December 2020. Employed since 2013 and designated as senior assistant from January 2018, Bakuli requested transfers to Kolkata to stay with his parents during covid-19.

–PTI

From March 2020, he remained absent without permission, ignoring multiple communications and a show-cause notice, and failing to attend disciplinary proceedings.

The court noted he was given several opportunities to present his case but remained absent, leaving RBI no option but to initiate disciplinary action. —*PTI*

2 booked for stealing England team gear

KANSAS CITY, 14 JUNE

Two men have been charged with one felony count each of receiving stolen property late on Saturday after England's national team discovered that some of its equipment had been stolen while The Three Lions were moving from their pre-training base in Florida to their World Cup base camp in Kansas City.

Prosecutors in Jackson County, Missouri, charged Mustafa Salik and Erfan Kamal, both of San Antonio, Texas, with the class D felony, which carries a sentence of up to seven years in prison. Bond was set at $75,000 for each of them.

None of the stolen property, which was estimated at about $18,000 in value, was essential to England's preparations.

Items found in Salik and Kamal's possession included nine pairs of cleats, goalkeeper gloves, a World Cup soccer ball, several sets of shirts and shorts, electronics, stuffed animals, several signed national team jerseys and a Lego set of Nike Air shoes valued at $99.99. —*PTI*

Brazil rallies for 1-1 draw against Morocco

Vinícius Júnior

FIFA

Vinícius Júnior scores a 32nd-minute goal in WC opener

EAST RUTHERFORD, 14 JUNE

Samba soccer this wasn't.

Facing pressure to win its first World Cup title since 2002, five-time champion Brazil was outplayed early and needed Vinícius Júnior's 32nd-minute goal to gain a 1-1 draw against Morocco on Saturday in a pulsating, high-profile group match.

"We started on a really bad note," Vinícius said. "For certain, we got to hold on to the ball. We have to move better."

A semifinalist four years ago, Morocco had 12 shots in the first 30 minutes and went ahead on Ismael Saibari's 21st-minute goal, a chip over goalkeeper Alisson Becker.

"The team was a bit anxious at the beginning. Nerves were all over the place," Brazil coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "We did not play well: a few challenges, a very imbalanced team, we lost several balls, and I think we have to do better in that sense," he said.

Brazil celebrates after scoring against Morocco

Brazil evened the score 11 minutes later. Vinícius exchanged passes with Bruno Guimarães on the left flank, took a few touches to cut around Neil El Aynaoui and rifled a right-footed shot past the outstretched arm of Yassine Bounou for his 10th international goal.

"We are satisfied with the draw," Morocco coach Mohamed Ouahbi said. "We are not euphoric."

Fans in Brazil's canary yellow dominated the crowd of 80,663 at MetLife Stadium — only about five sections near the south goal had fans in Morocco's red.

Seleção supporters expected the flowing, entertaining play of Pelé's era and were subdued before Vinícius evened the score with his spectacular angled effort.

Brazil extended its unbeaten streak in World Cup openers to 21, including 17 wins, since a 1934 loss to Spain. No. 6 Brazil and seventh-ranked Morocco are the only top 10 teams to meet in the first round of the expanded 48-nation World Cup tournament.

Brazil star Neymar, recovering from a torn right calf, didn't dress for the game.

Morocco head coach Mohamed Ouahbi expressed confidence in the future of Moroccan football.

"For the future of Moroccan football, we are confident. We drew; we're happy. I'm not sad. We would have wanted to win, obviously, but I'm not sad," Ouahbi told reporters after the match, as per Reuters. "I want to go beyond the semi-finals, but it was a good match," he said. "One is good enough, and we'll improve." —*PTI*

LET'S GO AFTER SIXTH STAR

Brazil honours Pele & Zagallo

Brazil football paid a tribute to two of their biggest legends, Pele and Mario Zagallo, ahead of their FIFA World Cup 2026 opener against Morocco on Saturday. The official handle of Brazil football noted how this tournament marks the first FIFA World Cup after the deaths of Pele (in December 2022) and Zagallo (in 2024). It encouraged the fans and players to "believe" and chase the record-breaking sixth star on their shirt, for the legends who wore the team's vibrant yellow colours at the height of their success. Pele won the FIFA World Cup with Brazil in 1958, 1962 and 1970 editions, making it the most FIFA WC wins by a single player. Zagallo captured the 1958 and 1962 FIFA World Cups with Brazil as a player, the 1970 edition as a manager and the 1994 edition as a coordinator.

FIFA

SCOTLAND MARKS 28-YR ABSENCE WITH 1-0 WIN OVER HAITI

FOXBOROUGH, 14 JUNE

Coach Steve Clarke made it clear he didn't enjoy his first two experiences leading Scotland during lackluster showings in the European Championship.

So far the sport's biggest stage has brought him — and the Scots — a lot more luck.

John McGinn deflected a shot off an opposing defender and past goalkeeper Johny Placide in the 28th minute, and Scotland defeated Haiti 1-0 in Group C of the World Cup.

"When it went into the back of the net, you could feel the Scotland fans," McGinn said.

Scotland, making its first appearance in the tournament since 1998, earned its first World Cup victory since 1990, when it beat Sweden 2-1.

Getting those crucial points did a lot more than that. Group favorites Brazil and Morocco played to a 1-1 draw earlier in the day, putting Scotland at the top of the group standings.

Haiti, whose only other World Cup appearance was in West Germany in 1974, is still in search of its first World Cup point. The Grenadiers had multiple chances in the second half but couldn't quite equalize. Scotland came close to a goal in the 17th minute when captain Scott McTominay got loose and fired a shot that clipped the top of the post.

Haiti had its best opportunities in the second half. In the 84th, Frantzdy Pierrot, who moved from Haiti to Boston at the age of 11, hit a header that went a wide of the left side.

Scotland stays in town to play Morocco at Gillette Stadium on Friday. Haiti will next face Brazil on Friday. —*PTI*

Australia spoils Turkey's return with a 2-0 victory

VANCOUVER, 14 JUNE

Nestory Irankunda and Connor Metcalfe scored and Australia spoiled Turkey's return to the World Cup for the first time in 24 years with a 2-0 victory on Saturday night.

Goalkeeper Patrick Beach made eight saves for the Socceroos in their group opener as FIFA President Gianni Infantino looked on. Australia was playing in its sixth straight World Cup and seventh overall.

Turkey reached the semifinals of the 2002 World Cup but then missed five straight tournaments before qualifying this year by beating Kosovo in a playoff.

Irankunda broke through for the Socceroos in the 27th minute with a low shot while pursued by three defenders. It came less than a minute after the first-half hydration break.

Irankunda celebrated by punching the corner flag in a tribute to Australian soccer legend Tim Cahill. The 20-year-old who plays for Watford is the Socceroo's youngest-ever goal scorer at a World Cup.

Australia's Connor Metcalfe was impressive with his goal

Irankunda said the Socceroos took issue with comments Turkey captain Hakan Calhanoglu made a day before the match, proclaiming that his side had "more qualities and a more talented team."

Turkey maintained 72% of possession during the match and outshot the Socceroos 30-9, but couldn't manage to score.

It is the third World Cup appearance for the Turks, who reached the tournament for the first time in 1954. —*PTI*

Qatar scores first ever points in draw match

SANTA CLARA, 14 JUNE

Following a 1-1 draw against Switzerland in their FIFA World Cup campaign opener, Qatar coach Julen Lopetegui expressed happiness with his team's "mentality", saying that the team achieved one dream after sealing their WC qualification and now "they have the right to continue having that dream".

A late header by Boualem Khoukhi, which deflected off the Swiss defender Miro Muheim and was later adjudged to be an own goal, helped Qatar earn their first-ever FIFA World Cup points in an entertaining clash against Switzerland.

As quoted by Reuters, Julen said, "We achieved one dream when we arrived here, to be here, and now today is another little dream. And we have the right to continue having the dream."

Switzerland coach Murat Yakin rued over the fact that his side "lost two points". He said that while his side played with an attacking intent and made their chances, but maybe "they were not smart enough, not precise enough towards the end". —*ANI*

Qatar celebrates after scoring a late goal in their match against Switzerland

Australia thumps S Africa; NZ fumbles WI

MANCHESTER, 14 JUNE

Australia underlined its status as a title favourite by defeating South Africa by 65 runs in the first heavyweight clash of the Women's T20 World Cup on Saturday.

Chasing a record seventh title, Australia posted 172-8 before bowling out South Africa for 107 at Old Trafford. Phoebe Litchfield led the charge with a brisk 50 off 23 balls after Australia slipped to 22-2. Ellyse Perry and Georgia Wareham added valuable contributions as Australia recovered strongly. South Africa's Shabnim Ismail took a wicket but suffered a finger injury.

In reply, South Africa recovered from 7-2 through captain Laura Wolvaardt (44) and Nadine de Klerk, but Australia's spinners took control. Wareham starred with 3-13, a catch and a run-out as South Africa collapsed, losing its last five wickets for 11 runs.

In Southampton, defending champion New Zealand suffered a seven-wicket defeat to West Indies. Chasing 163, the Caribbean side rode on Shemaine Campbelle's unbeaten 90 off 62 balls and captain Hayley Matthews' 48. Campbelle registered her maiden T20I fifty after 122 innings. New Zealand paid for poor fielding, dropping six catches despite contributions from Izzy Gaze (39), Brooke Halliday (40) and Maddy Green (35 not out).

Meanwhile, Scotland secured its first Women's T20 World Cup victory, beating Ireland by 40 runs. The Bryce sisters, Kathryn (60) and Sarah (49), shared a 106-run partnership to guide Scotland to 161-5. Ireland was then restricted to 121, with Kathryn Bryce and spinner Katherine Fraser taking key wickets.

On Sunday, India plays Pakistan, Bangladesh meets newcomer Netherlands. —*PTI*

Australia's Georgia Wareham celebrates with teammates after running out South Africa's Marizanne Kapp, on the ground, during the Women's T20 World Cup match at Old Trafford, England, on Saturday —*PTI*

ICC T20 WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP ENGLAND & WALES 2026

Dhiraj, Kumkum clinch recurve mixed team gold

ANTALYA, 14 JUNE

India's Dhiraj Bommadevara and teenager Kumkum Mohod produced a brilliant display to upset reigning Olympic champions South Korea in straight sets and win the recurve mixed team gold at the Archery World Cup Stage 3 here on Sunday.

Dhiraj, 24, and 17 year-old Kumkum defeated Oh Ye-jin and Kim Je-deok 5-1 (37-36, 37-36, 39-39).

The Indian duo held their nerve throughout the final, with Olympian Dhiraj showcasing exceptional composure by shooting perfect 10s with his final two arrows to seal the contest.

It was the first World Cup gold medal for both Dhiraj and Kumkum in the mixed team event. Dhiraj, India's top-ranked archer, will be back in action in the individual semifinals as he chases a second medal.

Kumkum had earlier tasted success at the Shanghai World Cup Stage 2 last month, where she was part of India's gold medal-winning women's recurve team. —*PTI*

—ANI

PAK TT TEAM TOLD TO PAY FOR OWN TRAVEL & STAY AT ASIAN GAMES

KARACHI, 14 JUNE

Pakistan's top men's and women's table tennis players have been left shocked by the Pakistan Table Tennis Federation's decision to ask them to arrange their own funds if they wish to participate in the Asian Games in Japan later this year.

The players received the news when some of them approached PTTF officials during the ongoing two-day national trials in Lahore to enquire about their daily and travel allowances.

"We have been told that we will not be paid anything for appearing in the trials. Secondly, the players selected for the Asian Games will have to arrange their own air tickets and foreign currency at the rate of USD 50 per day to cover expenses during the Games," a player said.

The player said that when the athletes protested, a senior PTTF official told them they should be grateful that the trials had been organised, as the federation had not received any funds or grants from the Pakistan Sports Board.

Pakistan have never won a table tennis medal at the Asian Games or Asian Championships due to the dominance of leading nations such as Malaysia, China, South Korea and India. —*PTI*

LANKA BEAT WEST INDIES BY 37 RUNS TO LEVEL 3-MATCH T20 SERIES

KINGSTON, 14 JUNE

Sri Lanka leveled the three-match Twenty20 cricket series with a 37-run win over the West Indies on Saturday.

After being sent in to bat Sri Lanka made a competitive 194-6 on the back of half-centuries from Kamil Mishara and Dasun Shanaka before Wanindu Hasaranga and Dushmantha Chameera took three wickets each to limit the hosts' reply to 157 at Sabina Park.

Mishara made an unbeaten 61 from 40 balls and shared a 101-run stand with Shanaka (58 off 24 balls) to form the backbone of Sri Lanka's innings.

Shamar Joseph took 3-32 off his four overs, including a searing yorker which bowled Dunith Wellalage with the final ball of the innings.

The West Indies reply stuttered from the start as it slumped to 9-2 in the early overs, before Shimron Hetmyer and Rovman Powell combined for an 82-run stand to help recover the chase.

But the match turned decisively toward Sri Lanka in the 10th over.

Sri Lanka won the preceding — and soggy — three-match ODI series 1-0 after the final two matches were rained out. Sri Lanka won the first match by 41 runs.

The final match of the T20 series is scheduled for Sunday, also at Sabina Park in Kingston. —*PTI*

Dasun Shanaka and Kamil Mishara of Sri Lanka celebrate —*PTI*